

Global Right to Information Update

An Analysis by Region July 2013

FOIAnet

Freedom of Information Advocates Network www.foladvocates.net

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About the Freedom of Information Advocates Network

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About the Freedom of Information Advocates Network

The Freedom of Information Advocates Network (FOIAnet) is an international information-sharing network of organisations and individuals working to promote the right to access information held by public authorities or simply the right to information (RTI). It was founded at a meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria, in 2002, which brought together civil society groups from around Europe, as well as representatives from India, Mexico, South Africa and the United States. Together, the groups agreed on the importance of forming a global network to promote RTI.

The members of FOIAnet are civil society organisations with active programmes to promote the right to information. FOIAnet runs a discussion list for news and debate on the right to information. This is available to members, but also to individuals who register, and there are currently over 600 such people on this list. These include civil society organisation (CSO) representatives and lawyers, academics, information commissioners and others with a specialised interest in the right to information. The network launched and promotes International Right to Know Day, which takes place on 28 September every year.

Note: The historical term describing laws which give individuals a right to access information held by public authorities is 'freedom of information' (or FOI), and it is from this term that the name of FOIAnet is derived. As the idea of a human right to information has evolved, the term 'right to information' (or RTI) has become a preferred term among those who advocate for this key democratic right. Another commonly used term is 'access to information'.







Acknowledgements

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The photos displayed on the front cover of this report and on pages 2 and 4 were the winners of the 'I have a Right to Knowl' photo competition held to celebrate Right to Know Day 2012:

- Place: "The other access" by Ranakosca Tolojanshary, Antananarivo, Madagascar (page 2).
 >>> Place: 1 have a right to know! by Ramesh Soni, Dhar, India (page 4, tr
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In addition to the writers, thanks are due to a number of others who provided us with extra analysis of countries and regions, who applied to be writer organisations or who contributed to the debates that have informed our knowledge of the regions presented in this report. These include not just civil society advocates but also a rich community of journalists, information commissioners and people working in international institutions who consistently help to keep FOIAnet a fluid and active forum for exchanges about RTI.

Some of those who have contributed information compiled in this report: Daniel Metcalfe, Faculty Fellow in Law

and Government of the American University's Washington College of Law, United States; Helen Darbishire, Executive Director, Access Info Europe; Lilia Saúl Rodríguez, México Infórmate, Mexico; Mar Cabra Valero, journalist, Spain; Priscila Castello Branco, Contas Abertas, Brazil; and Saša Šegrt, Transparency International Croatia.

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- 3rd Place: 'The Godfather' by Rajarshi Chowdhury, Bangalore, India (page 4, bottom).

The other photos in the document (with the exception of the photo for Ear and Southware Asia) were also submitted to the 1 have a Right no know? photo compression. Aftering they were not accorded prices they have been included in this report due to their high quality and great capacity to communicate what the right to information means for citizens. Chredits for these photos are included within the body of the report.

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Rating, (www.rti-rating.org), a project by Access Info Europe and the Centre for Law and Democracy under which experts and lawyers analysed all national RTI Laws and comparatively rated them. The rating and maps in this report are therefore based on the strength of the legal protection for RTI in each country and should not be understood as an overall reflection of respect for RTI in practice. The RTI Rating is updated on a yearly basis and the country information included in the maps in this report is correct as of September 2012.

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The Freedom of Information Advocates Network has new been active for 10 years. Its members believe that transparent and accustable government is possible only where the right to information has been erathried in law and implemented in practice. In 2000, when the network was first flounded, just 40 countries had passed RIII laws. Today, that figure has more than doubled with 55 countries in recentain as the right to information.

As a result, billions of people around the workl now enjoy the right to access information held by their governments and national public bodies. Millions of people around the world have used three leves and policies to access public information, to enjoy see and prevent compaigns, to enhance their ability to participate in public affairs, to protect other human rights, to hold governments to account, to improve on service delivery, to facilitate their businesses and to funder their own personal goals. A growing number of international institutions have also recognized the right to information through policies gaing individuals as right to request and reconve information.

The right to information is also one of the founding isless behind a broader more impacts and accountable government which is gaining over more impacts and necognition. A notable development in this area has been the launching of the Open Government Partnership in 2011 which has the potential to provide a new opportunity for civil society to push for greater necognition and respect for the right to information.

FLOWest and its memorism con ord callon offices for even for most, of these developments, Novever, in many cases national RTI lases have come into place, or been improved, due to the campaigning, research and penseverance of chill society groups and advocates from across the secrit. Illiforus the efforts of these advocates, it would also not have been possible to achieve international recognition of the right to information as a human right.

A fact of FCM-ner's achievements over the first ten years of its existence, as well as remaining challenges and its goals for the next ten years are found in America Value Contains FCM-new 10-10-10 Estatement Achievements Challengers and Goals. This Global Right to Information Update looks at the work of FCM-ner and its members through a different lens, namely by assessing developments from the expressions of our decing in the sense both of being written by olds society organizations and of focusing or

Introduction

Ten Years of FOIAnet

The Freedom of Information Advocates Network has now been active for 10 years. Its members believe that transparent and accountable government is possible only where the right to information has been enshrined in law and implemented in practice. In 2002, when the network was first founded, just 40 countries had passed RTI laws. Today, that figure has more than doubled with 95 countries recognising the right to information.

As a result, billions of people around the world now enjoy the right to access information held by their governments and national public bodies. Millions of people around the world have used these laws and policies to access public information, to expose and prevent corruption, to enhance their ability to participate in public affairs, to protect other human rights, to hold governments to account, to improve on service delivery, to facilitate their businesses and to further their own personal goals. A growing number of international institutions have also recognised the right to information through policies giving individuals a right to request and receive information from them.

The right to information is also one of the founding ideas behind a broader movement for open and accountable government which is gaining ever more impetus and recognition. A notable development in this area has been the launching of the Open Government Partnership in 2011 which has the potential to provide a new opportunity for civil society to push for greater recognition and respect for the right to information.

FOIAnet and its members do not claim credit for all, or even for most, of these developments. However, in many cases national RTI laws have come into place, or been improved, due to the campaigning, research and perseverance of civil society groups and advocates from across the world. Without the efforts of these advocates, it

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would also not have been possible to achieve international recognition of the right to information as a human right.

A list of FOIAnet's achievements over the first ten years of its existence, as well as remaining challenges and its goals for the next ten years are found in Annex I, which contains FOIAnet's 10-10-10 Statement: Achievements, Challenges and Goals. This Global Right to Information Update looks at the work of FOIAnet and its members through a different lens, namely by assessing developments from the perspective of civil society in the sense both of being written by civil society organisations and of focusing on developments of relevance to civil society.

Beyond the very general goal of fastering a better understanding among our members, the Update has a number of more specific objectives. Many RTI advocates around the world face common challenges; sharing information about successful adultions or errategies for tacking these challenges is an important way to help others adule them. We believe that the regional nature of the Update is particularly important in this regard. The FOI movement has developed in different ways in different regions, are

The Lipitate rewals that the challenges faced by advocative, and the campaigning tactics used in each region, are at times remarkably similar. National divide society couldings, the remarkable, similar hashed by many authors as having made a central contribution to campaigns, in other case challenges differ greatly depending on cultural content. For exemple, in South Asia, a problem has been identified of a lack of NOO transparency, which has revaid an environment where some cell society groups are leading by exemple; this issue is knitter complicated by the fact that, in some countries in the region, call society is formally covered within the service of the neither ASII lease.

In many regions there are relatively strong relations among advocates from different countries; the Update seeks to fourer better understanding and to stimulate international dislayer among the different regions of the world about this cere human rights issue and its development gaing forward. We note that while there are plenty of national publications about RIT developments, this is the last rule at the regional level. The Update also aims to draw stretion to the global nature of the movement for the right on information. We hope that this will assist about sects both within and outside of FOMPert find out about each other, and thereby further build and streenther the movement.

Finally, for individuals and groups righting for HIL particularly index worming indifficult controls who find thermales oursimathered by advocations for socretic, we hope that sooks from other areas of the world will serve as encouragement in their struggles to open closed doors. For FDIAnet, this sharing of experiences is a stop towards working evermone closely with our members to further work in solidarily to promote the resiliation of a strong and effective right to information worldwide.

Generating Knowledge Together

The Update is a complaint of dell society experiences reported directly by advocates themselves from an even regions of the world. This is what makes the Update perhaps the most comprehensive qualitative resource currently available for understanding the global movement for the right to information. At the same time, the extensive groupsphical reach of the Update means that it cannot be comprehensive in terms of covering every country or campaign. Earlier, the Update aims to provide an overview of the Update.

The main body of the Update comprises sections covering seven regions of the world which have desired regionisms of the right to information. The regions covered are Africa, the American, Australesia and Closaria, Gaza and Gourheast Africa, Luropa, the Middle Reat and North Africa and South Assid. The Update follows an agreed general structure, with each section gising a terif control and coveries of developments in the region, followed by a throught, was existence, approximation of success stories and feesare learned, and finally, a section which looks forward on how to address childrights. After beamed and finally, a section which looks forward on how to address childrights. After beame time, the style of presentation varies, and the choice of content for each region.

The presentation of regional material is complemented by case studies, sometimes of individual successful requests and in other cases with sories of campaigns and historical developments. Case studies are other able to transmit an effective snapshot of the situation to readers. Focused accounts also help us undentated the impact of the right to information on

The choice of authors was participatory from the beginning, Members of FOMent were asked to nominate themselves, as writing groups, and of those nominates, lead organizations were chosen by the FOMent Steering Committee, which is elected by the membership. Where no acting groups from a region nominated themselves, the Seering Committee is sterrified homes authority the field to member the the notion are string.

Taking Stock

The Global Right to Information Update has been prepared by the FOIAnet as part of the network's mandate to share information in support of the work of our members. The exchange of information, news and developments —through our discussion list and our website— has always been the main strength of the FOIAnet. The aim of this Update is to go beyond the news and questions that are shared on a daily basis through our discussion list. Specifically, it aims to probe more deeply into a key issue for our members, namely the way in which civil society working on right to information (RTI) issues has developed in the different regions of the world. In this way, we hope to foster a deeper understanding of the nature of challenges and opportunities for advocates across the network, as well as to facilitate the development of stronger relationships between advocates within and among different regions, and with FOIAnet itself.

Beyond the very general goal of fostering a better understanding among our members, the Update has a number of more specific objectives. Many RTI advocates around the world face common challenges; sharing information about successful solutions or strategies for tackling these challenges is an important way to help others solve them. We believe that the regional nature of the Update is particularly important in this regard. The FOI movement has developed in different ways in different regions, and each region has its own particular trajectory towards realising RTI.

The Update reveals that the challenges faced by advocates, and the campaigning tactics used in each region, are at times remarkably similar. National civil society coalitions, for example, are mentioned by many authors as having made a central contribution to campaigns. In other cases, challenges differ greatly depending on cultural context. For example, in South Asia, a problem has been identified of a lack of NGO transparency, which has created an environment where some civil society groups are leading by example; this issue is further complicated by the fact that, in some countries in the region, civil society is formally covered within the scope of the national RTI

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In many regions there are relatively strong relations among advocates from different countries; the Update seeks to foster better understanding and to stimulate international dialogue among the different regions of the world about this core human rights issue and its development going forward. We note that while there are plenty of national publications about RTI developments, this is far less true at the regional level. The Update also aims to draw attention to the global nature of the movement for the right to information. We hope that this will assist advocates both within and outside of FOIAnet find out about each other, and thereby further build and strengthen the movement.

Finally, for individuals and groups fighting for RTI, particularly those working in difficult contexts who find themselves outnumbered by advocates for secrecy, we hope that stories from other areas of the world will serve as encouragement in their struggles to open closed doors. For FOIAnet, this sharing of experiences is a step towards working evermore closely with our members to further work in solidarity to promote the realisation of a strong and effective right to information worldwide.

Generating Knowledge Together

The Update is a compilation of civil society experiences reported directly by advocates themselves from seven regions of the world. This is what makes the Update perhaps the most comprehensive qualitative resource currently available for understanding the global movement for the right to information. At the same time, the extensive geographical reach of the Update means that it cannot be comprehensive in terms of covering every country or campaign. Rather, the Update aims to provide an overview of the overall civil society and advocacy movement in each region.

The main body of the Update comprises sections covering seven regions of the world which have distinct experiences of the right to information. The regions covered are Africa, the Americas, Australasia and Oceania, East and Southeast Asia, Europe, the Middle East and North Africa and South Asia1. The Update follows an agreed general structure, with each section giving a brief contextual overview of developments in the region, followed by a 'strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats' or SWOT analysis, a presentation of success stories and lessons learned, and finally, a section which looks forward on how to address challenges. At the same time, the style of presentation varies, and the choice of content for each region reflects the judgement by contributors of what they felt was important.

The presentation of regional material is complemented by case studies, sometimes of individual successful requests and in other cases with stories of campaigns and historical developments. Case studies are often able to transmit an effective snapshot of the situation to readers. Focused accounts also help us understand the impact of the right to information on communities and democratic development.

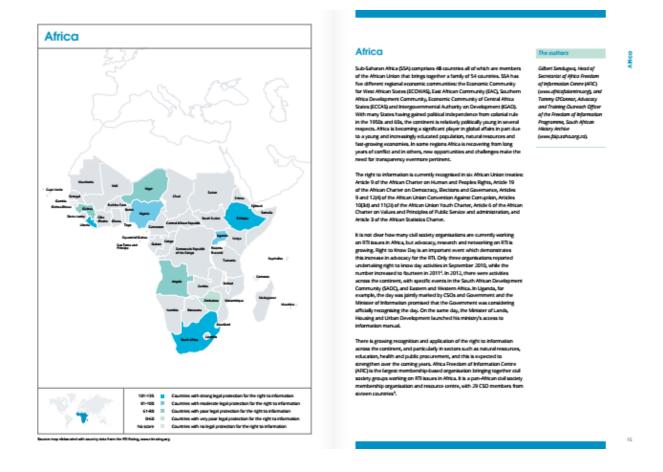
The choice of authors was participatory from the beginning. Members of FOIAnet were asked to nominate themselves as writing groups, and of those nominated, lead organisations were chosen by the FOIAnet Steering Committee, which is elected by the membership. Where no active groups from a region nominated themselves, the Steering Committee identified known experts in the field to contribute the relevant sections.



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The struggles and successes of advocates outlined in this Update are part of a bigger picture, as outlined in FOIAnet's 10-10-10 Statement. The Update sets the stage for what is the beginning of a process for meeting those challenges and achieving those goals. We hope FOIAnet members and others will find it useful as a resource towards that end.

Africa



Africa

Africa

Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) comprises 48 countries all of which are members of the African Union that brings together a family of 54 countries. SSA has five different regional economic communities: the Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS), East African Community (EAC), Southern Africa Development Community, Economic Community of Central Africa States (ECCAS) and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). With many States having gained political independence from colonial rule in the 1950s and 60s, the continent is relatively politically young in several respects. Africa is becoming a significant player in global affairs in part due to a young and increasingly educated population, natural resources and fast-growing economies. In some regions Africa is recovering from long years of conflict and in others, new opportunities and challenges make the need for transparency evermore pertinent.

The right to information is currently recognised in six African Union treaties: Article 9 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, Article 19 of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, Articles 9 and 12(4) of the African Union Convention Against Corruption, Articles 10(3d) and 11(2i) of the African Union Youth Charter, Article 6 of the African Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and administration, and Article 3 of the African Statistics Charter.

It is not clear how many civil society organisations are currently working on RTI issues in Africa, but advocacy,

research and networking on RTI is growing. Right to Know Day is an important event which demonstrates this increase in advocacy for the RTI. Only three organisations reported undertaking right to know day activities in September 2010, while the number increased to fourteen in 20112. In 2012, there were activities across the continent, with specific events in the South African Development Community (SADC), and Eastern and Western Africa. In Uganda, for example, the day was jointly marked by CSOs and Government and the Minister of Information promised that the Government was considering officially recognising the day. On the same day, the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development launched his ministry's access to information manual.

There is growing recognition and application of the right to information across the continent, and particularly in sectors such as natural resources, education, health and public procurement, and this is expected to strengthen over the coming years. Africa Freedom of Information Centre (AFIC) is the largest membership-based organisation bringing together civil society groups working on RTI issues in Africa. It is a pan-African civil society membership organisation and resource centre, with 29 CSO members from sixteen countries3.

The authors

Central African Republic

South Sudan Ethiopia

Gilbert Sendugwa, Head of Secretariat of Africa Freedom of Information Centre (AFIC) (www.africafoicentre.org), and Tammy O'Connor, Advocacy and Training Outreach Officer of the Freedom of Information Programme, South

African History Archive (www.foip.saha.org.za). Mauritania Cape Verde Senegal Gambia Guinea-Bissau Sierra Leone Côte d'Ivoire Mali Niger Nigeria Cameroon Gabon Sudan Chad Eritrea Guinea Burkina Faso Benin Djibouti Somalia I iberia Ghana Togo

| Equatorial Guinea |
|--|
| Uganda |
| Kenya Congo Sao Tome and Principe |
| Democratic Republic |
| Rwanda of the Congo |
| Burundi |
| Tanzania |
| Seychelles |
| Comoros Angola |
| Zambia |
| Malawi |
| Madagascar Zimbabwe Mozambique |
| Mauritius |
| Namibia Botswana |
| Swaziland |
| Lesotho South Africa |
| 101-135 |
| Countries with strong legal protection for the right to information |
| 81-100 |
| Countries with moderate legal protection for the right to information |
| 61-80 |
| Countries with poor legal protection for the right to information |
| 0-60 |
| Countries with very poor legal protection for the right to information |
| No score |
| Countries with no legal protection for the right to information |
| Source: map elaborated with country data from the RTI Rating, www.rti-rating.org |
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The notion of secrecy as safe was therefore carried by many liberation movements into government when they won freedom from colonial powers

SWOT Analysis

Sub Saharan Africa is a diverse continent that has had different colonial and past-colonial influences that affect the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to RTI on the continent. The matrix below summarises the situation.

Regarding the region's strengths, a number of old society organisations in Africa received early exposure and staining on RTD prior to their government counterparts, enabling them to provide headership and advocage on RTL in countries like blygands, Kerny, laboraters and Mosambipus, child society organisations initiated and drafted RTI Bills. In Nigeria, years of repressive regimes galantised civil society to form strong movements for right to information advocacy. Social Afficies, the first Afficies country to adopt an RTI law, in 2000, was used as a reference point for civil society and public officials allow fromplace. Afficial in official grain or mills for risks on implementation. In addition, a number of coalitions have been formed at the actional laws to conceive a feets, and others provides more little under the automatic and conceives affects, and others countries are detinations.

The major availables and oil acciety organizations involved in RTI work in Affice amanuse from historical distrustances as well as country specific contexts. The opportunition nature of the former colonial regimes in Affice let a fasting legisly of a cubar or secrency that was targety, maintained in the past colorial environment and which therefore continues to affect the custrent development of RTI and the work of distructive grantiastion. Part of the reason for this is that Bloration movements were forced to operate undergranut, making succept a way of life within those movements, and central to their survival. The notion of succept as allow sus therefore carried by many liberation movements into government when they won headen from colorial powers. The relatively recent nature of this history and the continued presence of many liberation movements as presented by constructive and presented or former of the history.

Generations of oppression have also created a disterry that in many instances does not believe it has the right to know about the actions of government. Furthermore, many citizens feel indebted to the movements, now governments, that Elevanoid them though colonial oppression and are healtant to pask out against them. This poses significant challenges for society organisations, which must educate the public about the right and

For a long time many Ahican governments and indeed members of the media and other stainsholders considered the right to information as being for the exclusive benefit of the reading rather than an enabling basic human right for everyone. This misundensurating has negatively impacted on the property of the propert

Strengths

- Strong regional and nutional RTI networks
- CSD experience in initiating and drafting RTI Bills
 Consider RTI innovindes have
- Growing RTI knowledge base
 Reasonable regional policy environment
- Understanding of RTTs utility in various sectors
- Understanding of RTIs utility in various sectors.
 Special mechanisms such as the ACHPR Special Rapporteur on Preedom of Expression and Acce to Information.

Opportunitie

- Improving policy environment underpinned by 6
 Ablace Library treation that recognition DTI
- African Union treaties that recognise RTI Large number of CSDs with Observer status wi
- Special initiatives like APAII Declaration, Open Government Partnership
- 17 countries have constitutional guarantees for RTI
- Model Law on Access to Information for Africa
- The Open Contract Initiative

Weaknesses

- Secretive culture left by colonial regimes and
- Weak laws and poor enforcement mechanisms and capacity
- Inadequate political will for RTI in the majority of countries.
- national level
- Restrictive legal and operational environments to civil society
- Slow democratisation and lack of human right culture
- Limited funding base for CSD and government programmes

Threats

- Militarism and lack of democratic space
- ompeting global interests and emergence of ne
- Economic hardships leading to the sacrifice of human rights agencies and the prioritization of economic issues over RTI
- Terrorism and emergence of secretive regimes

thile it is necognised that RTI is a crossouring issue, an absence of CSOs educated exclusively to the promotion of this right at the country level has ndermined its development by limiting opportunities for mainsteaming, cordination and locused attention. In Agolla, for example, lack of flective coordination among CSOs, combined with a lack of political will by

The restrictive environment for civil society in many African countries has also posed a challenge for RTI. In Ethiopia, for example, the Charities and Societies Produmation Act Treatrics foreign funding yet there are very lev other fundraising apportunities within the country. A more recent law

SWOT Analysis

Sub Saharan Africa is a diverse continent that has had different colonial and post-colonial influences that affect the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to RTI on the continent. The matrix below summarises the situation.

Regarding the region's strengths, a number of civil society organisations in Africa received early exposure and training on RTI prior to their government counterparts, enabling them to provide leadership and advocacy on RTI. In countries like Uganda, Kenya, Botswana and Mozambique, civil society organisations initiated and drafted RTI Bills. In Nigeria, years of repressive regimes galvanised civil society to form strong movements for right to information advocacy. South Africa, the first African country to adopt an RTI law, in 2000, was used as a reference point for civil society and public officials alike throughout Africa in drafting their own bills or ideas on implementation. In addition, a number of coalitions have been formed at the national level to coordinate efforts, and share capacities and strategies.

The major weaknesses of civil society organisations involved in RTI work in Africa emanate from historical circumstances as well as country specific contexts. The oppressive nature of the former colonial regimes in Africa left a lasting legacy of a culture of secrecy that was largely maintained in the post colonial environment and which therefore continues to affect the current development of RTI and the work of civil society organisations. Part of the reason for this is that liberation movements were forced to operate underground, making secrecy a way of life within those movements, and central to their survival. The notion of secrecy as safe was therefore carried by many liberation movements into government when they won freedom from colonial powers. The relatively recent nature of this history and the continued presence of many liberation movements as present-day governments in Africa presents a unique challenge for RTI activists.

Generations of oppression have also created a citizenry that in many instances does not believe it has the right to know about the actions of government. Furthermore, many citizens feel indebted to the movements, now governments, that liberated them from colonial oppression and are hesitant to speak out against them. This poses significant challenges for civil society organisations, which must educate the public about the right and the power it affords them.

For a long time many African governments and indeed members of the media and other stakeholders considered the right to information as being for the exclusive benefit of the media, rather than an enabling basic human right for everyone. This misunderstanding has negatively impacted on efforts to recognise and advance RTI.

Strengths

- Strong regional and national RTI networks
- · CSO experience in initiating and drafting RTI Bills
- · Growing RTI knowledge base
- · Reasonable regional policy environment
- 11 countries with RTI laws
- Understanding of RTI's utility in various sectors
- Special mechanisms such as the ACHPR Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information

Opportunities

- Improving policy environment underpinned by 6 African Union treaties that recognise RTI
- Large number of CSOs with Observer status with ACHPR
- Special initiatives like APAI Declaration, Open Government Partnership
- 17 countries have constitutional guarantees for RTI
- · Model Law on Access to Information for Africa
- The Open Contract Initiative

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from colonial powers

Weaknesses

- Secretive culture left by colonial regimes and liberation movements
- · Weak laws and poor enforcement mechanisms and capacity
- Inadequate political will for RTI in the majority of countries

- Weak institutional mechanisms at regional and national level
- Restrictive legal and operational environments for civil society
- · Slow democratisation and lack of human rights culture
- Limited funding base for CSO and government programmes

Threats

- · Militarism and lack of democratic space
- Competing global interests and emergence of new powers.
- Economic hardships leading to the sacrifice of human rights agendas and the prioritisation of economic issues over RTI
- Terrorism and emergence of secretive regimes

While it is recognised that RTI is a crosscutting issue, an absence of CSOs dedicated exclusively to the promotion of this right at the country level has undermined its development by limiting opportunities for mainstreaming, coordination and focused attention. In Angola, for example, lack of effective coordination among CSOs, combined with a lack of political will by government, has thwarted implementation of the country's RTI law.

The restrictive environment for civil society in many African countries has also posed a challenge for RTI. In Ethiopia, for example, the Charities and Societies Proclamation Act restricts foreign funding yet there are very few other fundraising opportunities within the country. A more recent law

in Efficient prohibits the use of Stype and other value over the internet programmes. I blands, NGCs are required to remes while licenses every year, while fears abound that stringers interigration policies could be used to intrivide the unan rights NGCs, based on their funding sources, staff coming from abroad, and fine international work. Other weaknesses in the region relate to lack of skills, limited funding for rold society and poor capacity to manage reformation inside public backs.

At the same time, there have been important successes. Over the past toes years in Uganda, human rights CSDs have internalled campaigns for transparency and accountability, loading to the resignation of three service ministers and trial of three other ministers in court against compation charges, and three other ministers in court against compation charges, and three other ministers fairing a parliamentary inquiry on corruption. These events have altered the political environment, with the nalleg party losing rise out of eleven parliamentary by elections. During the consideration of Anglish state of human rights report at its 51° season, the African Commission on Human and Peoplet Rights asked the government to explain why, despite the overwhelming needs of the papulation and the human rights situation in the country, so few clail society actors were mentioned in the report. An improving policy environments in Recursor the growth of RIO on the continent. The number of African Union instruments that recognise the right has increased to six, as noted above.

The origin of RTI laws in Africa is mixed, in Uganda and Nigeria, chil society organisations campaigned for RTI laws and socrared this as part of the straugie for receiption of demonstrating rights. On the other hand, the governments of Angola, Gainea-Conaley, Niger, and Zimbabase adopted RTI laws on their own intitation and not as part of a demonstrational process. The Angolan laws is a direct copy of the law of Portugal, the former coloniser; it is not clear what motivated military juntas in Niger and Guinea-Conaley to adopt RTI laws a lew months before handing over power. In Zimbabase, President Magglain 1244-1247 government adopted the restrictive Access to information and Protection of Privacy Act (MPPAP) in response the media's exposure of numerous acandisk involving senior ZNAU-PF leaders at a time when the opposition Movement for Democratic Change was gaining strength and visibility. The law was designed to control the fee flow of information and the tabilities of the law was designed to control the fee flow of information and the tabilities of the law as designed to control the fee flow of information and control the flow flow of the government estimative powers to control the media and suppress three speech by requiring the registration of journalisms and prohibiting the foliuse of free expension. These powers have been widely dusted.

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The African Commission on Human and Proplet Rights, through its Special Rupportsur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information, has made RTI a central focus of the Commission's agends. Principles for of the Declaration of Principles of Freedom of Expression in Africa, adopted by the Commission in 2000, has become a central point on the Commission and human rights groups when assessing the complaints of State Parties to the African Charine on Human and Proplet Rights in relicion to STIL.

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RTI advocacy has grown significantly in Africa thanks to the engagement of Gelf society organizations. However, to increase the impact, these organizations need to document their work better, and to share information about their achievements and failures. This process should make full use of advances in information and communication technologies on the continent.

At the national level, 17 countries have constitutional guarantees for RII, with Norsy being the most recent country to do so. Bleven African countries —namely South Africa, Angolia, Trababave, Ugarnal, Shithopia, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Gairnes Consley, Tunisia and Reamide have adopted RII laves. The government of Zembia has promised no priorities the passage of the 18th International Consley, Tunisia and Reamide, Sienta Leone and Ghana have at unious trines made done public declarations of their internation to adopt at unious trines made design public declarations of their internation to analysis of those declarations raises concerns about whether or not they can be taken enclosed, Norsy, MII III this base mensional and the passage doors. Open Government Partnership, launched on 20 September 2011, appears to have re-invicated initiatives for manusarrous captos the residen. The Open Government Partnership, launched on 20 September 2011, appears to have re-invigarated initiatives for transparency across the resion

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At the same time, there have been important successes. Over the past two years in Uganda, human rights CSOs have intensified campaigns for transparency and accountability, leading to the resignation of three senior ministers and trial of three other ministers in court against corruption charges, and three other ministers facing a parliamentary inquiry on corruption. These events have altered the political environment, with the ruling party losing nine out of eleven parliamentary by-elections. During the consideration of Angola's state of human rights report at its 51st Session, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights asked the government to explain why, despite the overwhelming needs of the population and the human rights situation in the country, so few civil society actors were mentioned in the report. An improving policy environment has favoured the growth of RTI on the continent. The number of African Union instruments that recognise the right has increased to six, as noted above.

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strength and visibility. The law was designed to control the free flow of information, rather than to facilitate it, and contains provisions which give the government extensive powers to control the media and suppress free speech by requiring the registration of journalists and prohibiting the 'abuse of free expression'. These powers have been widely abused.

At the time of publication, Rwanda is the most recent country in the world to have adopted an RTI law, which took place in March 2013. Rwanda

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The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, through its Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information, has made RTI a central focus of the Commission's agenda. Principle IV of the Declaration of Principles of Freedom of Expression in Africa, adopted by the Commission in 2002, has become a central point for the Commission and human rights groups when assessing the compliance of State Parties to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights in relation to RTI.

Close collaboration between the current Special Rapporteur, Pansy Tlakula, and CSOs has resulted in the adoption of the African Platform on Access to Information declaration and the Model Law on Access to Information for Africa, which was adopted very recently by the Commission. Through her efforts, RTI is now a common feature in the Commission's conclusions and recommendations in country state of human rights reports.

RTI advocacy has grown significantly in Africa thanks to the engagement of civil society organisations. However, to increase the impact, these organisations need to document their work better, and to share information about their achievements and failures. This process should make full use of advances in information and communication technologies on the continent.

At the national level, 17 countries have constitutional guarantees for RTI, with Kenya being the most recent country to do so. Eleven African countries –namely South Africa, Angola, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Ethiopia, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Guinea Conakry, Tunisia and Rwanda– have adopted RTI laws. The government of Zambia has promised to prioritise the passage of the RTI bill. The governments of Botswana, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Ghana have at various times made clear public declarations of their intention to adopt RTI laws, although the passage of a significant period of time since many of those declarations raises concerns about whether or not they can be taken seriously. Kenya's RTI bill has been revived and could be passed soon. The Open Government Partnership, launched on 20 September 2011, appears to have re-invigorated initiatives for transparency across the region.

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